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Thomas A. Ashforth
Chairman

Robert M. Arnold
President

January 26, 2015

Good afternoon, Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Urban, and members of the Committee on Children.

I was pleased to learn that the General Assembly Committee on Children is considering Senate Bill 209 to provide funding of Reach Out and Read throughout the State of Connecticut. As a constituent, member of the Stamford School Readiness Council and Program Manager for Literacy Volunteers at Family Centers, I urge you to support the bill.

Reach Out and Read is working toward the day when all children will have a home library to share with friends and family, and children enter kindergarten supported by engaged parents, and ready to learn. Reading aloud with young children is one of the most effective ways to expose children to enriched language and encourage early literacy skills needed to promote school readiness. It stimulates their imagination and expands their understanding of the world. It helps them develop language and listening skills and prepares them to understand the written word. The Reach Out and Read model includes advising parents about the importance of reading aloud, modeling and providing developmentally appropriate books to children.

With your support we can foster the joy of reading and support our children and families in becoming life-long learners. Thank you for your time and your commitment to ensuring that all of our children enter kindergarten ready to read, learn and succeed.

Sincerely,
Lucia Cook
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